

NOTES ON THE GENUS PINUS

THE BLACK CONE OF PINUS PONDEROSA

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IN SARGENT'S SILVA and in his Manual, also in Sudworth's Forest Trees of the Pacific Slope and in his Pine Trees of the Rocky Mountain Region, some of the cones of *Pinus ponderosa* Douglas are described as dark purple (nearly black) in color. The quotation below is copied from Sudworth in Bull. U. S. Dept. Agric. No. 460, p. 31 (1917).

"The cones of some trees are a bright grass-green when mature, while those of other trees are a dark purple, there being no essential difference between trees bearing cones so dissimilar in color."

In autumn when the cones are completely dried, the purple color disappears and is never found in herbarium collections. The ultimate color is brown, never purple or black. The explanation is simple. The purple color is a transient intermediate stage between the summer-green and the autumn-brown coloration of the maturing cones. Its life is brief and, as a consequence, it has escaped the notice of collectors. I have happened on it in five or six species, such as *Pinus rigida* Miller where the intermediate color is brown and the autumn-color is yellow, and also in *Pinus Greggii* Engelmann, where the intermediate color, strange to say, is a brilliant scarlet and the autumn-color is Naples yellow. The purpose of this article is to call attention to the intermediate color and to prevent further error from that source.